NOVA SCOTIA
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Community Services
Services communautaires

2015-2016 French-language Services Plan
Plan de services en français 2015-2016

Message from the Deputy Minister

Bonjour
On behalf of Nova Scotia's Department of Community Services, Housing Nova Scotia and the local Housing Authorities, I am pleased to present our department's French-language Services (FLS) Plan for 2015-2016. Our hope is to make it easier for Acadian and francophone community to access our services in their own language.

The vital programs and services we offer to Nova Scotia children, youth and families have been enriched this past year with some new additions to our organization. The Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector Division, Disabled Persons Commission and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women were welcome additions to Community Services. Their French language service initiatives are incorporated within this plan. Bienvenue!

In collaboration with other designated public institutions, we are committed to enhancing French-language Services to all Nova Scotians. We plan to continue to focus on actively offering French services in those areas where it will have the most impact. Offices and staff with the capacity to offer services in French are indicating this through visual and oral cues- please look for their *Bonjour!* signs. Offices without this capacity now have the ability to access francophone staff through our internal online directory of bilingual staff. This coordinated approach to service delivery is expected to enhance our capacity to offer services in one's language of choice.

We recognize that the Acadian and francophone community plays a vital role in the cultural richness of our province. It is our commitment to share in its growth by making measurable and sustainable progress for this and future generations. This plan sets out our goals for the upcoming year and also identifies the advances achieved over the past year.

We invite you to visit our website for program information and services available in French at http://gov.ns.ca/coms/fr/index.html.

Also, feel free to contact our bilingual French-language Services Coordinator who may also help you access some of our programs and services. His contact information is:
Brian Doucet- tel: (902) 742-6211 or email: doucetbl@gov.ns.ca

Merci beaucoup
Lynn Hartwell
Deputy Minister
Department of Community Services, Housing Nova Scotia and Housing Authorities

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2014-2015

Strategic objectives are from the Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services

Corporate Objective 1 – Leadership and Policy Direction
Champion and support the policy development, planning, and administrative framework for the implementation of the French-language Services Act and Regulations.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

1.1-To help support the development of Nova Scotia's French-language services within the DCS/HNS.

1.2-To help raise awareness of DCS/HNS's commitment to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.

Planned Measures for 2014-2015

1.1- - Deputy Minister and Senior management team will support FLS Coordinator's continued participation on Provincial FLS Coordinators Committee and its applicable sub-committees. They will also facilitate staff engagement in FLS initiatives and planning process. FLS Plan shall be published on our internet and intranet sites in English and French.

- Workplace Initiative's Provincial Advisory Committee will add FLS as a standing agenda item to all their meetings. FLS Coordinator will vet new initiatives through committee for endorsement and will update committee accordingly. New Orientation project will include FLS initiatives. Staff and client validation of organizational Service Code will include the Acadian and francophone community.

1.2- - Will assure DCS/HNS representation at Acadian and francophone community organizations and 3rd party service providers' AGMs e.g .Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE), Réseau Santé, etc.

- French language Services will figure more prominently within our organization and foster staff engagement now that it is an integral part of DCS/HNS's Workplace Initiatives section.

- DCS/HNS will continue to be represented on Réseau de développement économique et employabilité Nouvelle-Écosse by bilingual ESIA caseworker.

- DCS/HNS will continue to be represented on Réseau Santé along with Acadian Affairs, Department of Health and Wellness and numerous groups representing Acadian and francophone organizations.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2014-2015

1.1- The Department of Community Services and Housing Nova Scotia (DCS/HNS) was represented on the French–Language Services (FLS) Coordinating Committee and on three of its sub-committees; 1-Human Resources, 2-FLTraining and 3-Active Offer.

- DCS//HNS's FLS Plan contributed to the Government's annual progress report on FLS.
- Deputy Minister memos went out to all staff inviting them to participate in our very own National Acadian Day celebrations and Acadian Star Recognition program held across the province. Her messages also highlighted the importance of actively offering FLS.

1.2- DCS/HNS is an active member of both Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse and Réseau de développement économique et employabilité Nouvelle-Écosse. Updates are provided to Senior Management annually. We were also represented at Réseau Santé and Acadian Federation of NS's annual general meetings as well as the Bonjour! Awards for Excellence in FLS.

- Having the FL Coordinator as a member of Workplace Initiatives' Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) has proven beneficial to our organization. FLS is now an integral part of all departmental programs and considered as new initiatives are developed or consultations are conducted. FLS updates were presented at all PAC meetings. The committee's involvement was also vital in development of many FL initiatives ie; i) revising, distributing and posting departmental translation protocol to our intranet site, ii) inclusion of FLS into Employee Orientation Project, iii) development of our organization's FL Directory. 100% of DCS/HA's Workplace Initiative Unit has completed *Acadie at a Glance* training.

Strategic Objective 2 – Availability and accessibility of French-language services
Increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through active offer, communications, printed and electronic materials, and by increasing the capacity of the public service to offer services in French.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

2.1-DCS/HNS continuously strives to actively offer French-language services and communications in French to the Acadian and

francophone community.

2.2- DCS/HNS ensures relevant information and material are made available in French.

2.3- DCS/HNS will help raise awareness of the Acadian and francophone community cultural identity and our commitment to the FLS Act and Regulations. Also make staff aware of training opportunities.

Department's Planned Measures for 2014-2015

2.1

- Our organization will have access to a province-wide internal directory/data base of employees capable and willing of offering French services. When a client would be better served in French, an active offer can now be made to accommodate this need. DCS/HNS offices and employees will be taking measures to self-identify and ensure that French-language Services are evident, available, and accessible. When an office or program does not have the capacity to offer services in French itself and the need is identified, they will now have the ability to search for bilingual staff within our own organization who also possess the specific program knowledge.

- In our latest FL planning questionnaire of DCS/HSN managers and directors, only one-third of them indicate their offices are actively offering French services. However, an astounding 87% indicate their office would be willing to participate in such an initiative. It is therefore our aim to realize a steady increase in the number of DCS/HNS offices and programs who will be actively offering French services. These will be tracked and reported on annually.

- The Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) program is in the process of translating its program forms to be able to provide the option to Francophone clients of having their application, Release of Information Consent form and the Understanding of Participation form completed in French. These are mandatory forms that ESIA clients must complete as part of the eligibility determination process for benefits. As such, it is important to ensure clients fully understand the content.

- Family and Community Supports will make it possible for the public to now have the ability to request a search of the Child Abuse Register in either French or English.

2.2

- Our ESIA policy sections hope to have online information available in French during the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Our ESIA policy division is currently reviewing its policy manual and consideration will be given to the inclusion of FLS when completing any changes to the on-line manual.

- Family and Community Supports Division plans to translate documents related to the Child Abuse registry and update the Website for public access to forms in French; translate booklet for families who have children taken into care and to translate other Child Abuse Registry documents and update website material accordingly.

- DCS Licensing Services Division will assure translation of its checklists and application forms. These will all be available to the public in 2014-15.

2.3

- DCS/HNS- FLS Coordinator will work with each departmental program and region to identify FL initiatives and strategic plans that are based on Acadian community needs. All management teams will be engaged in the FLS planning process. Each team will also be responsible to indicate planned initiatives and report accordingly annually.

- Having the FL Coordinator as an active member of the Workplace Initiatives- Provincial Advisory Committee proves to be a valuable asset for both FLS and Workplace Initiatives. This partnership greatly increases the amount of FLS being considered as our organization develops departmental programs and conducting consultations. The Coordinator will continue to update and promote FLS initiatives through Provincial Advisory Committee engagement.

- FLS Coordinator responsible to promote and assist employees wishing to participate in French language training, Acadie at a glance, French Lunch & Learns, Consortium national de formation en santé, etc. Attendees will be tracked and reported on annually. Disseminate all FLS training information through managers/directors and also post on FLS intranet site. Coordinator will assist programs and regions identify gaps in service and develop strategic plans to address service needs.

- FLS coordinator will expand National Acadian Day celebrations to DCS/HA offices located in areas with high francophone concentration. Will encourage participation from our partnering departments and agencies.

- French-language Services will be included in our organization's staff orientation initiative.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2014-2015

2.1 - Our organization now has access to an internal directory/data base of employees capable and willing of offering French services. When a client would be better served in French, an active offer can now be made to accommodate this need. When an office/program does not have the capacity to offer services in French themselves and the need is identified, staff now have the ability to search for bilingual staff who also possess the specific program knowledge from within our own organization.

- Our latest FL planning questionnaire of DCS/HSN managers and directors, indicates 57 % of their offices are now actively offering French services. This is up from 33% last year.
- Housing Nova Scotia's bilingual director of Community Relations and Public Affairs works to improve French-language services and information provided by the agency to the public.
- In Child Welfare and Residential Services, consideration was given to the Acadian and francophone community given that DCS has a responsibility to match children with foster and adopting families who share the same linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

2.2- DCS/HNS translated 53 documents for a total of 60,000 words in 2014-15. We are pleased that 12 different programs within our organization utilized translation services this past year; this number has doubled in the past 2 years. Here are a few examples of translations that were realized and made available to the public;

- National Child Benefit Brochure
- A Legacy for our Children Youth and Families
- Sexual Violence Strategy
- What you need to know- brochure
- Family and Seniors' Pharmacare program
- Heating Assistance Rebate Program

- Child, Youth and Family Supports added a French translation of instructions for applying for a Child Abuse Register search. All forms used for the Child Abuse Register have been translated into French; this includes the search form, the completed search results form, and the return form letter identifying that information is missing.

- New resources and parenting programs were made available to parents in all satellite sites of la Pirouette- one of our valued 3rd party service providers. These sites include Isle Madame, Halifax, Sydney, Tusket and the main office in Pointe-de-l'Église. All five locations of la Pirouette are much more visible and known in their respective communities. By ensuring

that existing programs and services were maintained and made accessible to families residing in these communities, at risk and vulnerable children and their families are more included. Other new services include;

- Outreach services and programs have been developed and delivered in the Francophone community of Sydney via a new satellite location at le Centre communautaire Étoile de l'Acadie. Some of these programs include: Bon Appétit, Au gallop, Tumblebugs, Club de lecture and Grouillons ensemble.
- By offering more services readily available in French through la Pirouette, we are able to provide early learning experiences that are crucial for Acadian children living in a minority context in that they provide a solid French first language foundation.

- Our Licensing Services Division translated all of its checklists and application forms. These will all be made available to the public as needed.

- NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women translated and provided the following publications through partnering organizations;
  - *Guide pour les filles*
  - *Ressources pour les filles, pour les familles et éducateurs, et tout le monde au sujet l'hypersexualisation des filles*
  - *Des votes pour les femmes : un guide politique*

- Our Non-Profit Sector Program enabled the hiring of a French speaking trainer for the Community Sector Council of NS (CSCNS) to offer additional courses.

- The Accessibility Legislation website content was provided in French at http://novascotia.ca/coms/accessibility/default-fr.asp . The site included links to an on-line submission form (now closed) and a pdf version of the *"Invitation à livrer des commentaires sur les mesures législatives visant l'accessibilité"*. Print versions of the 'document de travail' were available on request and at the 11 public consultation sessions held throughout the province in November and December 2014.

2.3- Information on FL Training, Acadie at a Glance and Bonjour! Awards for Excellence in French-language Services, Consortium national de formation en santé and Lunch & Learns was disseminated via managers and directors as well as posted on DCS/HNS Intranet site. DCS/HNS participants are tracked and reported on annually to Senior Management Team.

- A National Acadian Day observance was held in five DCS/HNS locations throughout the province with 160 staff attending.

This year's participating sites were Port Hawkesbury, Dartmouth, Middleton and Yarmouth Districts Offices as well as Head Office. This year, other departments were invited and joined our organization in this cultural celebration.

- DCS/HA launched its very own French-language Services Recognition Initiative called the Acadian Star. Workplace Initiatives now officially recognizes individuals or teams that go above and beyond to provide services to the Acadian and francophone Community.

- French-language Services was included in the development our organization's new web-based Orientation Program.

Strategic Objective 3 – Community engagement and outreach
Encourage the participation of the Acadian and Francophone community in the development of government policies with a view to improving the delivery of services in French.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2014-2015

3.1- DCS/HNS will provide opportunities for French speaking Nova Scotians to be engaged in their language of choice.

3.2- DCS/HNS will help the Acadian and francophone community be aware of any opportunities to participate on Agencies, Boards or Commissions under the responsibility of the Department as opportunities arise.

3.3- DCS/HNS will help raise the Acadian and francophone community's awareness of our department's complaints process.

3.4- DCS/HNS will promote the development and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community by enhancing the delivery of French-language services.

Department's Planned Measures for 2014-2015

3.1-

- DCS/HNS will respond in French to all correspondence received in French. We will also work in partnership with other Designated Public Institutions on revising the provincial Communication Protocol. DCS/HNS will participate on French-language Services Active Offer Coordinating subcommittee.

- Services for Persons with Disabilities program in Western Region, in partnership with CORD (Clare Organization Representing Persons with Disabilities), plan to continue working with the community of Clare and local service providers to meet the needs of francophone youth in that area.

3.2

- Continue to work with the Executive Council Office who has the primary responsibility for recruiting members of the public to government agencies, boards and commissions, and regularly advertises opportunities in both French and English. For more information please visit www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/abc.

3.3-

- DCS/HNS anticipates adding new bilingual appeal board members thus enabling our department's ability to hold appeal hearings in French. Employment Support and Income Assistance's Appeal brochure will be translated and made available to the public in French.

3.4

- Our Yarmouth District Office will; a) be working with the Tri-County Women's Centre in the creation of a Coordinated Services for Seniors Social Enterprise- with the hopes of expanding the service in French to Clare and Argyle areas B) work with the Board of Atelier de Clare in the planning of expanding services for people with disabilities in Clare and c) continue offering the VOICES program in local CSAP schools.

Progress in Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2014-2015

3.1- In accordance to the *FLS Act* and Regulations, as well as our own internal Communication Protocol, all written correspondence received in French were responded to in French with the help of CNS Translation Services and/or our FLS Coordinator.

3.2 & 3.3- Appeal board vacancies continue to be filled and some of the board members do have the capacity to hear Employment Support and Income Assistance appeals in French. Bilingual appeal board members indicate they are willing to hear appeals in French wherever needed in the province. Recruitment efforts for new appeal board members included Le Courier and French community radio stations.

3.5- The Minister's Advisory Panel on Accessibility Legislation brought together a diverse group of people with experience and expertise that reports to the Minister of Community Services, Joanne Bernard. The report will provide recommendations on accessibility legislation for Nova Scotians to ensure they have equal opportunity to reach their potential. Consultations included a French session in Church Point at Université Sainte-Anne. This session was extended to other sites throughout NS by simultaneous videoconference with other Université Sainte-Anne campus sites in Halifax, Petit-de-Grat, Saint-Joseph-du-Moine and Tusket. Along with our external partners, many DCS/HA programs were involved in the process. These included; the Disability Support Program, Disabled Persons Commission, Policy and Information Management, Workplace Initiatives and District Offices in Port Hawkesbury and Yarmouth.

- Western Regional Disability Support Program (DSP) and the Yarmouth District Office have met with the Board of Atelier de Clare to plan expanding services for people with disabilities in the municipality of Clare.

Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2015-2016

Strategic objectives and expected results are from the Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services

Strategic Objective 1 – Leadership and policy direction
Champion and support the planning, administration, and policy development frameworks for the implementation of the French-language Services Act and its regulations.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

1.1-To help support the development of Nova Scotia's French-language services within the DCS/HNS.

1.2-To help raise awareness of DCS/HNS's commitment to the French-language Services Act and Regulations.

Department's Planned Measures for 2015-2016

1.1- - Deputy Minister and Senior management team will support FLS Coordinator's continued participation on Provincial FLS Coordinators Committee and its applicable sub-committees. They –will also facilitate staff engagement in FLS initiatives and planning process. FLS Plan shall be published on our internet and intranet sites in English and French.

- Workplace Initiative's Provincial Advisory Committee will continue having FLS as a standing agenda item to all their meetings. FLS Coordinator will vet new initiatives through committee for endorsement and will update committee accordingly.

1.2- - Will assure DCS/HNS representation at Acadian and francophone community organizations and 3rd party service providers' AGMs ie. Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE), Réseau Santé, etc.

- French-language Services will figure more prominently within our organization and foster staff engagement now that it is an integral part of DCS/HNS's Workplace Initiatives section.

- DCS/HNS will continue to be represented on Réseau Santé along with Acadian Affairs, Department of Health and Wellness and numerous groups representing Acadian and francophone organizations.

Strategic Objective 2 – Availability and accessibility of French-language services
Increase the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through active offer, communications, printed and electronic materials, and by increasing the capacity of the public service to offer services in French.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

2.1-DCS/HNS continuously strives to actively offer French-language services and communications in French to the Acadian and francophone community.

2.2- DCS/HNS ensures relevant information and material are made available in French.

2.3- DCS/HNS will help raise awareness of the Acadian and francophone community cultural identity and our commitment to the FLS Act and Regulations. Also make staff aware of training opportunities.

Department's Planned Measures for 2015-2016

2.1- The Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) program is in the process of translating its program forms to be able to provide the option to Francophone clients of having their application, Release of Information Consent form and the Understanding of Participation form completed in French. These are mandatory forms that ESIA clients must complete as part of the eligibility determination process for benefits. As such, it is important to ensure clients fully understand the content. Also, the program will now have the ability to track maternal language of those utilizing our services.

2.2 - The Minister's Advisory Panel Report on Accessibility Legislation will be translated to French and posted to the http://novascotia.ca/coms/accessibility/default-fr.asp web-site.

- Non-Profit Sector Program will produce four one-page fact sheets on the non-profit sector in bilingual format.

- Disabled Persons Commission will be creating a series of statistical fact sheets and an Annual Report in both English and French.

- NS Advisory Council on the Status of Women plans the following FLS activities:
- French translation of
  - Status of Women's publication, *Making Changes*
  - An Atlantic publication entitled "*Guide for Gender Equitable Employment*" from the Atlantic Forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women

- Status of Women also operates in bilingual Atlantic and national meetings, where meeting material and press releases will be made available in both French and English.

- Status of Women will reach out to the Government of Nova Scotia's French Language Coordinators, and introduce their publications that are available in French to assist with its further dissemination and use.

2.3- DCS/HNS- FLS Coordinator will work with each departmental program and region to identify FL initiatives and strategic plans that are based on Acadian community needs. All management teams will be engaged in the FLS planning process. Each team will also be responsible to indicate planned initiatives and report accordingly annually.

- Having the FL Coordinator as an active member of the Workplace Initiatives- Provincial Advisory Committee proves to be a valuable asset for both FLS and Workplace Initiatives. This partnership greatly increases the amount of FLS being considered as our organization develops departmental programs and conducts consultations. The Coordinator will continue to update and promote FLS initiatives and engage our Provincial Advisory Committee.

- FLS Coordinator is responsible to promote and assist employees wishing to participate in French language training, Acadie at a glance, French Lunch & Learns, Consortium national de formation en santé, etc. Attendees will be tracked and reported on annually. All FLS training information shall be disseminated through managers/directors and also posted on FLS intranet site. Coordinator will assist programs and regions identify gaps in service and develop strategic plans to address service needs.

- Workplace Initiatives and FLS coordinator will expand National Acadian Day celebrations to DCS/HA offices located in areas with high francophone concentration. Will continue to encourage participation from our partnering departments and agencies.

- French-language Services will be included in our organization's staff orientation initiative Phase 2.

Strategic Objective 3 – Community engagement and outreach
Encourage the participation of the Acadian and Francophone community in the development of government policies with a view to improving the delivery of services in French.

Department's Goals and Objectives 2015-2016

3.1- DCS/HNS will provide opportunities for French speaking Nova Scotians to be engaged in their language of choice.

3.2- DCS/HNS will help the Acadian and francophone community be aware of any opportunities to participate on Agencies, Boards or Commissions under the responsibility of the Department as opportunities arise.

3.3- DCS/HNS will help raise the Acadian and francophone community's awareness of our department's complaints process.

3.4- DCS/HNS will promote the development and vitality of the Acadian and Francophone community by enhancing the delivery of French-language services.

Department's Planned Measures for 2015-2016

3.1- DCS/HNS will respond in French to all correspondence received in French. DCS/HNS will participate on French-language Services Coordinating subcommittees. These include Human Resources, FL Training and Active Offer. Our organization will incorporate all FL Training recommendations brought forward by the FLS Coordinating sub committees. FLS Coordinator will engage DCS/HA's Human Resources in introducing revised FLS-HR Guidelines.

- DCS/HA will adhere to revised Communication Nova Scotia's FLS guidelines and tools. These include; Communications Guidelines/ Translation Service Guidelines/ Consultation Guidelines/ Consultation Toolkit/ Web Guidelines.

3.2 - DCS/HA shall continue to work with the Executive Council Office, who has the primary responsibility for recruiting members of the public to government agencies, boards and commissions, and regularly advertises opportunities in both French and English. For more information please visit www.gov.ns.ca/exec_council/abc .